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A

LECTURE

ON THE

V E N D I D A D S A D E

OF THE PARSI'S

DELIVERED AT BOMBAY

ON THE 19TH AND 26TH JUNE, 1833.

BY THE

REV. JOHN WILSON.

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PREFACE.

THE following Lecture forms part of a short series of Discourses, which I have lately delivered on the Pársí Religion. It is published in compliance with the expressed wish of a number of respectable individuals who are attached to that faith; and it is submitted to their candid consideration, not with the view of wantonly wounding their feelings, but in the hope that it may contribute in some degree, to lead them to such inquiry as may issue in the rejection of error and embracement of truth. The Pársís of India are superior in many respects to most of their countrymen; and it is the earnest hope, and desire, of not a few of their European friends, that they may be among the first who will rigidly examine the claims of the different religious systems, and devote themselves, with their acknowledged intelligence and vigour, to the pursuit and practice of truth. The zeal, and good temper, with which they have entered into religious discussions during the last two years; the decision with which many of them have already renounced

the claims of the Bundéshné, and Ar dai Viráf Námeb; the encouragement which they have afforded to the Native Newspapers, which, under good management, may prove invaluable blessings to the community; the increased readiness which they evince to promote a general education; their gradual inclination to the adoption of what is praiseworthy in European customs; and many other circumstances, which could easily be enumerated, tend to strengthen these expectations.

It is greatly to be regretted, that none of the Gujarátí translation of the Vendidad Sádé have yet been published. Every Pársí has a right to examine for himself the foundation of his religious observances. It is my decided persuasion, that the Vendidad Sádé has only to be thoroughly known to be rejected, like the Bundéshné, by hundreds who now acknowledge it as a heavenly directory.

The publication of my other Lectures on the Pársí Religion, I shall reserve till such time as I shall be able to engross them in a work, which I am preparing, and which is intended to embrace an Analysis of all the books esteemed sacred by the followers of Zoroaster, and a Compendious View of their Religious History, and Manners and Customs.

LECTURE.



THE Vendidad Sádé is the work to which the Pársís, as I formerly stated, attribute most importance. It exists in the original Zand language. Part of it has been translated into Sanskrita. All of it exists in Gujaráthí, though it has not been published in that tongue. It was translated into French by Anquetil du Peron, and, along with the other works forming the Zend-Avesta, was published by him in 1771*. From his version, and with an occasional reference to the Gujaráthí translations, and to the original, which I was enabled to inspect through the assistance of a learned Pársí, I shall appeal. I have a considerable degree of confidence, that, in all essential points, my quotations will be found to be correct.

*I have made
an English
translation
to which*

That the Vendidad Sádé has no claim to be considered as a divine revelation, will, I think, be evident from the following remarks.—

I. There are no proofs either of its authenticity, genuineness, or credibility.

* I have not yet seen the new French translation lately published in Paris,

It is ascribed to Zoroaster, who is said to have flourished in the reign of Gushtasp, the son of Lohorasp, or Darius Hystaspes, about 500 years before Christ; but there is no proof even of its existence long after his day, far less of the allegation that it was written by him. While it professes to report the result of an interview of Zoroaster with Hormazd, it speaks of the great Zoroaster as having existed before the time at which this interview took place. Near the commencement of the second Fargard, or Section, Hormazd is represented as saying, "Jamshed, ruler of people and of flocks, O holy Zoroaster, is the first man who has consulted Hormazd as you do now, O Zoroaster. I have clearly revealed to him the law of God, and of Zoroaster." Near the commencement of the nineteenth Fargard, Hormazd observes to the person whom he addresses in the Vendidad, that "Zoroaster was stronger than Ahriman, author of the evil law; he struck the people given by this Dew, &c."

Whether the Vendidad is the same as when it was originally composed, no man can tell.

Its narratives, and even those of them belonging to the first Fargard, which refer to the early peopling of the world, are entirely destitute of that sobriety and consistency which are the characteristics of truth. Of their absurdity, we shall afterwards have abundant proof. There is no history which can associate the reported miracles

of Zoroaster with the book; and there is not the slightest evidence that these miracles ever took place. "I have asked," I observed in one of my controversial letters, "some persons to state their reasons for believing in the stories about the miracles; and they have not been a little puzzled. Some of them say that they have heard them from their parents; others that they have read them in books. Are these sufficient reasons for crediting them? Many foolish tales are afloat in the world; and many errors and falsehoods of various kinds are contained in books. An investigation of the strictest kind must be resorted to; and the most diligent search must be made. Who saw these miracles? who gave testimony respecting them? Who examined the witnesses? Who recorded the evidence? Who can prove that it is uncorrupted? These are inquiries which undoubtedly ought to be made." For a long time I have challenged the Pársís in this place to bring forward information on this subject; but, though they have shewed no want of zeal in behalf of their religion, they have as yet done nothing to settle inquiry on the subject.

11. The Vendidad Sâdè is very defective as a rule of Faith.

It is a mere fragment of a work which is lost; and since this is the case, and since, as I remarked in a former lecture, we have reason to infer, that if God be pleased to grant a revelation of his will, he will be pleased to preserve it either en-

tire, or to such a degree as that it will prove sufficient for the instruction of mankind, it becomes a duty to inquire into the loss of the work to which it is said to have belonged. Why was it permitted to be destroyed, as is alleged, by Sikandar Rûmî, Umar Khâlifa, or any other individuals? This question requires particularly to be urged when the professions of the Vendidad are considered. Hormazd, when addressing Zoroaster thus speaks of it, "Behold how much this Vendidad, which I have given to Zoroaster, is above every other word: how much more excellent, how much more pure, how much more holy it is. It is as the river Vurokashé compared with all other rivers. Behold, O Asphantamán Zoroaster, how much the Vendidad which I have given to Zoroaster, is above every other word, how much more excellent, how much more pure, how much more holy, it is. It is as great waters compared with little ones. Behold, O Asphantamán Zoroaster, how much this Vendidad is above every other word, how much more excellent, how much more pure, how much more holy it is. It is as great birds compared to little ones. Behold O Asphantamán Zoroaster, how much this Vendidad is above every other word, how much more excellent, how much more pure, how much more holy it is. It is as the land of Alborj in comparison with other lands. Let the Dastur recite the Vendidad. Let him who has sinned recite it. Let no one enter into the gate of that person who will not

recite it. Let him who will not give what is prescribed to him, get nothing to eat." In the eighth Fargard, the Revelation granted to Zoroaster is called, "the unalterable law of the Mázdiasnians." In the view of all this, I ask, How comes it to pass that the 20th Nosk is all that remains of the Avastá. Had Zoroaster said, that most of his book was to be lost, we should not have framed an objection against him from the violence of the Greeks, and Muhammadáns; but when he says that all the Avastá was to remain, and we perceive that most of it has perished, we are forced to declare that his claims have no ground in truth.

III. The Vendidad Sádè robs God of all his glory, inasmuch as it represents the Supreme God as inactive, as disregarding of the concerns of the universe, and as having surrendered the administration of affairs to Hormazd.

Zorwân, or the first cause of all things, is seldom mentioned; and his excellence and perfections are not described. He is spoken of as "Time without bounds;" as wholly absorbed in his own excellence; and as a "bird moving on high." Near the conclusion of the third Fargard, Hormazd speaks of the world as belonging "to that being who is absorbed in his own excellence." He is, perhaps, recognized by Zoroaster in the sixth Fargard, and in some other places. He is invoked as "Time without bounds", in the nineteenth Fargard. But this notice which is taken of him is inconsistent with his character as the

Sovereign of all. He is not set forth, as he ought to be, as the Creator, calling all things into existence by the word of his power; and as the Governor, doing according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. To Hormazd, indeed, are ascribed most of those perfections, and works, which are peculiar to God. He is called "the Pure, the Just Judge." He is the "Sovereign Judge, the sovereign excellence, the sovereign knowledge." He is "the best, the purest, the most intelligent, who possesses "the best body, and who by reason of purity is above all." (Fargard 19) He is represented in many places as the Creator, and the ruler of the visible world.

So powerful is the objection to be urged against the Vendidad from this view of matters, that many of the *Behedin*, or Lay Pàrsís, have been led to deny the existence of Zorwàn altogether, and to maintain that Hormazd is God, and God alone. They do this contrary to the testimonies from Greek, Latin, and Armenian authors, which I lately brought before your notice. They do this contrary to the faith of their forefathers, as expressed in the verses presented by them to the Hindù Rànà on their first arrival in Sanjàn, in which Hormazd is described merely as the Divine Hormazd, the chief of the Amshàspands, or Archangels. *They do this can-

* The names of the seven Amshaspands are Hormazd, Bahaman, Ardebehisht, Shariver, Asphandad, Khurdad, Amardad or Murdad.

trary to the doctrines of their Dasturs, and Mobeds, who, in their conversations with me, have admitted the existence of Zorwàn, and spoke of him as *Lárang*, the colourless, and *Nirákar*, the formless. They do this contrary to the books which they esteem sacred. In the *Si-Rozé*, appointed for Hormazd, he is called an Izad. In the *Yesht* which bears his name, he is spoken of as "the depositary of the law given by Zorwàn." In the nineteenth Fargard of the *Vendidad Sádè*, Hormazd is represented as having been created by Zorwán. In the second Fargard of the same work, he speaks of himself as distinct from God. When Zoroaster asked him whence cometh the light which brightens the *Virafshùé'*, which Jamsheed had perfected, he replied, I have given to him a hundred portions of the light given by God." In the nineteenth Fargard, he is represented as opposing Ahriman by the word *Honover*, and the Law of the *Mázdiasuáns*, or in other works, by means prescribed to him by another. There is no foundation for the opinion, that, according to the *Pàrsí Religion*, Zorwan and Hormazd are the same divinity. In a catechism lately published by a Mobed, the name of Hormazd, who is all in all in the *Vendidad*, does not once occur. The author of that work is probably ashamed to give Hormazd the honours which are conferred on him in the *Vendidad*, and well he may.

IV. The Vendidad Sâdê gives a highly irrational account of the origin, and operations of natural good, and evil.

Hormazd was opposed by Ahriman in all his works. When Hormazd created the Eriènè Viêjo, similar to Behisht, Ahriman, according to the first Fargard, produced in the river the great adder or winter; when he created Soghdo, abundant in flocks and men, Ahriman created flies which spread mortality among the flocks; when he created Bákhdí pure and brilliant in its colours, Ahriman created a multitude of ants which destroyed its pavilions; when he created any thing good, Ahriman was sure to create something evil. "Ahriman, this chief of death," it is said in the beginning of the nineteenth Fargard, "this chief of the Dews, comes from the north, he proceeds from the places which are north. Ahriman full of death, the master of the evil law, runs continually every where producing devastation. He is the author of evil" . . . "They see," it is said in the same chapter, "running in crowds, and running separately and apart, Ahriman full of death, chief of the Dews, the Dew Andar, the Dew Sâval, the Dew Nàongs, &c. The author of evil has produced and engendered in time these Dews."

The power ascribed to Ahriman in these passages, viz that of creation, is more than can be possessed by any created being. This remark, I know, does not militate against the

doctrine of two principles, which I believe to be consonant with the Pársí religion, inasmuch as it, and its followers, do not admit, that Ahriman was created by God, but teach that he is the product of primeval darkness, in the same way that Hormazd is the product of primeval light. I do however, oppose this doctrine of two principles, for the reasons which I brought forward when I lectured on the Unity of God; and I further add, that it is only the grossest ignorance which can denominate that as evil which is spoken of as having this character in many of the instances which are given in the Vendidâd Sâdê. The winter, for example, which is said to have been created in Eriânê Véidjo, takes place according to the established laws of nature, and, notwithstanding certain inconveniencies which attend it when it is not provided against, it is in the highest degree beneficial to man, and other animals, inasmuch as it forms a diversity in the seasons, and purifies and restores the earth and atmosphere. The flies and ants, which made devastations in Soghd and Bâkhdī, bear the marks of benevolent workmanship, and are happy in their own existence. They have their uses to man, inasmuch as they remove many impurities; and he has, generally speaking, the power of defending himself against them, when they prove too numerous, either by removing from them or destroying them. The power ascribed to the Dews, when they are represented as terrifying Hormazd, and as leading

him to use enchantments against them, cannot for a moment be admitted.

There are certain actions, on the other hand, attributed to the devils of which they are certainly innocent. "Zoroaster asked, Does the water strike (or destroy) man when he is drowning? Hormazd replied: It is not water which strikes man.—The Dew Astoniad binds him who falls into the water; and while he is thus bound, the fish attack him. The body rises afterwards, and then descends again."—"Does fire attack men? Hormazd replied, Fire attacks not men. It is the Dew Astoniad who binds him; and when he is thus bound the birds attack him, and the fire consumes the bones which confine the soul of this man." The accusations which are here made are in the highest degree absurd. Every person knows, that death is produced in water by the entrance of that element into the chest, and other parts of the body where the vital functions are performed, and by the want of air necessary to breathing which it produces. Fire is known to destroy by combustion. It is the Deification of the elements which led to this nonsense. Fire and water are so venerated by the Pârsís, that they are supposed to be incapable of being the instruments of an injury.

V. The Vendidad teaches and recognizes the deification of the elements, and other inanimate objects.

When I make this assertion, I directly con-

tradict many of the mercantile Pàrsís of this place. When they are called to account about the worship of fire, &c. they come forward with various excuses, and apologies. Some of them inform us, that they view the sun as the emblem of God; some, that they view it as the residence of God; some, like a Mohed, who has published a catechism, to which I have more than once referred, that they view it as a *Kibla*, in the same way as the Muhammadans view the temple of Mecca. Some maintain, that in looking to the sun, they worship only the Amshàspand who presides over it. In making the assertion, however, I state what is agreeable to the views of the majority of the Pàrsís, and particularly of the Priests; and what is borne out by several passages and circumstances, to which I shall now direct your attention.

In the eighteenth Fargard, the following injunction is laid down;—"At the beginning of the first watch of the night, the fire of Hormazd says, I desire the succour of the chiefs of the house. I desire them to rise, to gird on the *Kùstì*, standing or being upon the *Sadar* or carpet, to wash their hands, to carry wood for me, and to make the flame burn from pure wood, after having washed their hands. I (fire) shall inflict evil upon the Dew who inspires with passion, and who spreads himself every where in the world." Fire is represented in the same place as making a similar request at the second and third watches of the

night, and making similar promises. In a subsequent part of the same chapter, we find the following passage, "He who carries pure wood to the fire of Hormazd, after having washed his hands, shall be great. That fire shall reward him with thanks and gratitude. Be happy, it shall say to him, be without evil, be filled with good, or wealth. Let your herds be great; let your children encrease to a great number; let your soul be happy in the world; let it live night and day. Such is the prayer which I fire make for him who carries to me pure and inflammable wood well examined." In the same chapter, and in other places, occur the words, "I adore water." Of rain, there is, in chapter 21st, the following exaggerated account;—"The rain removes Asharé, removes Eghúaré, removes Eighráum, removes Ogrhanm, removes envy, removes death, removes fever, weakness, avarice, deranged passions, deafness, and voluntary blindness of mind, removes the serpent, removes the deceit, the wickedness, impurity and corruption which Ahriman, has produced in the bodies of men, removes every kind of evil and death, and every kind of magic taught by the Páris, and strikes all the Darvands." The defilement of water is represented, in the eighth Fargard, as highly criminal. "If there is water on a road, and if he who was sullied has gone into this water, a crime which merits chastisement, what shall be his punishment? Hormazd replied, He shall be beaten

four hundred times with leathern cords, of the skin of the horse, or of the goat." In the 14th Fargard, a curious distinction is made between Fire, and Earth, and other objects: "You shall purify the sullied places by pronouncing these words, Protect me entirely who am your servant, O Hormazd, render me great, now and for ever. Thou shalt purify the fire by pronouncing well these words,—I approach thee, O fire, active from the beginning, thou principle of union, between Hormazd &c. Thou shalt purify the water by pronouncing these words, I adore thee, I desire to preserve thee pure. Thou shalt purify the earth by pronouncing these words, I adore thee visible earth, chief of Females. Thou shalt purify the cattle in pronouncing these words, Pray that what they require may be given to these cattle. He who acts in this manner shall go to Behisht." Fire and earth are here directly addressed and worshipped, while Hormazd is supplicated in behalf of places and cattle. "The sun (or Mithra)," it is said in the 21st Fargard, "as a vigorous courser, rises with majesty from the top of the Alborj, and gives light to the world. From this mountain, given by Hormazd, he rules the world". "The moon, depositary of the seed of the bull, darts with glory from the heights of the terrible Albordj, and gives light to the world. From this mountain given by Hormazd, she governs, or exerts her sway over, the whole world, which is the road to the two destined places, up-

on grain given in abundance, and upon water." In the nineteenth Fargard, the stars are represented as the guardians of the seed of bulls. So sacred is the earth, that its defilement is stated in many places to be one of the greatest sins. Not a doubt can remain as to the actual deification of the elements, and particularly of fire, which is collected with great care from various quarters, which is regularly fed by dry and consecrated wood, and which is viewed as so sacred that the Pársís have an aversion to blow out a lamp, or to carry muskets.

In connection with this subject, and the apologies to which I have already alluded, I may with propriety give a quotation from a letter which I formerly addressed to the Pársís. "The Pársís laugh at the Hindús, when they see them bending before a stone, casting flowers upon it, walking round it, and addressing it in prayer. Their own conduct, however, though not so grossly ridiculous, is, when viewed in reference to God, equally dishonourable to his name, and sinful in his sight. The Hindú, having carved an image on a stone, repeats some mantras, and says that God has taken up his abode within it, and falls down and worship it. The Pársí looks up to the heavens, and having perceived the great light which God has given to enlighten the path of man, he presents it with his adorations. He forgets that it has no life. He acts just as absurdly as any man would do, who,

instead of going to the Governor with a petition, should go and pray to the lamp which is burning on his table.

“There are some persons who say, that there is an Izad who presides over the sun; and, that when they pray in the direction of that luminary, they pray to *him*. They say that, that as a King has many servants about him, so God has ministers who transact his business; that they convey the petitions to God; and that all affairs must be managed through their intervention. They liken Him, who is the Lord of all, to weak and ignorant man. God is everywhere present; and he hears, without any distraction, or trouble, whatever prayers are addressed to him. God is omnipotent; and he can effect his will, according to his sovereign pleasure. If a King were ready to hear all his subjects, and to give them direct answers; and if his nature were more benevolent, and exalted, than that of his servants, none would ever think of going to them with a petition. They would at once address the King. Why is not God at once addressed? Why is a creature resorted to as a Mediator?

“There are some persons who affirm, that they neither worship the Sun, nor the angel who presides over it; but use it as the symbol of God. I would say to such persons, that they do not learn the lessons from God’s works which they are fitted to teach. As the workman is greater than his work, so God is greater than *his* work.

He is consequently infinitely more glorious than the sun, and it is *his* glory which must be remembered, and contemplated, and adored in worship, and not that of the sun. God may command the use of symbols in his worship; but, as he has no likeness, he will not exhibit any symbol of himself intrinsically considered, and, as he alone is worthy of divine honour, he will not command the worship of a symbol. The Pàrsís, however, pray to the sun, and fire, and address them in worship; and, therefore, it is not necessary for me to enlarge on this evil*.” They would be inexcusable, even though they should consider fire as a *Kibla*. There is in the composition of it, and in the view of it, no propriety, and no peculiar manifestation of God.

Beside the elements, there are numerous other improper objects of worship recognised in the Vendidàd. Many of them are alluded to in the following passages. “Invoke, O Zoroaster, the pure law of the Mâzdeyasnàn, Invoke, O Zoroaster, the Amshâspand who gives abundance to the seven Késhwars of the earth, ? Invoke, O Zoroaster, the Heaven given by God, Time without bounds, and the birds which move on high. Invoke the swift wind given by Sapandomád, the

* Dr Hyde, who tried to apologize as much as possible for the worship of fire by the followers of Zoroaster, was compelled, in the following terms, to admit, that they believe in its intrinsic sacredness;—“Ideoque omnis Ignis, sive sit coelestis et superior Planctarum et Meteororum; sive terrestris, aliquid Sanctitatis et Beatitudinis in se habere creditur.”

pure daughter of Hormazd. Invoke, O Zoroaster, my Farúhar. Invoke me who am Hormazd, the best, the purest, the boldest, the most intelligent, who possess the most excellent body, and who by reason of purity am exalted above all. Invoke me, whose soul is the most excellent word. Invoke, O Zoroaster, the people of Hormazd, according to what I have said to Zoroaster.—I invoke, rejoined Zoroaster, Hormazd, who has given the pure world. I invoke Mithra, who makes the barren earth fertile, brilliant with glory, shining as the light, very great, very excellent, very victorious. I invoke the pure Sérosh who strikes with extended arm the congregated Dews. I invoke Mansraspan (the excellent word,) pure and brilliant. I invoke the Heaven given by God, Time without bounds, the birds created on high. I invoke the swift wind Sapandomàd, the pure daughter of Hormazd. I invoke the pure law of the Mázdiasnâns given to Zoroaster, and which removes the Dews.—Zoroaster consulting Hormazd said to him, Just Judge of the world, who has produced the various beings, How shall I render worship, agreeable to the productions which proceed from Hormazd? Hormazd replied, Approach, O Asphantamán Zoroaster, the trees which are growing. Pronounce distinctly these words near the growing trees: I pray the trees holy and pure, which Hormazd has given. (*Abundance & Behisht*) Draw the Barsom from the trees, from the whole length of them; when in

the act of cutting the Barsom, holding with the right hand, let him worship Hormazd, the Amshaspands, Hom, the colour of gold, the pure Bâhman whom Hormazd has established chief of the pure Behisht." A passage containing such injunctions as these cannot be reflected on, with candour, without the perception of its absurdity and sin. God only can hear prayer, so as to grant an answer to it; and he alone deserves to be worshipped and adored. He is so greatly exalted above all created beings and objects, that there can be no comparison between him and them; and when they are served, this difference is not perceived; and God's Majesty and glory are not realized. He requires to be loved with all the heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and woe be to those who make to themselves Gods who are no Gods.

VI. The Vendidad gives an erroneous view of the natural state of man.

In the seventh Fargard, it is said, that "man is created (or produced) pure, and worthy of Behist." In the tenth Fargard, a similar statement is made. The influence of these, and other assertions on the minds of the Pársis, is very injurious. "One of your correspondents," I have observed in a letter to the Editor of the Harkâra and Vartamân, "writes, that from the day that his parents bring him from a world replete with light, into this even surpassing it in splendour, a mortal keeps his heart as pure as crystal, yea

purer, until the season when he becomes acquainted with the habits of the world.' It is the general belief of your tribe, as I have been informed, by your Dasturs, that a person does not become a responsible moral agent till such time he is invested with the Kústí; and that after this investment, he preserves himself from all sin. These opinions are opposed to the facts, which are daily and hourly witnessed. We see anger, and discontent, and other evil feelings evinced by infants, We see stubbornness, and rebellion characterize the youngest children. We observe them violate truth; and we see them remove the property which does not belong to them. They easily learn that which which is evil; but it is extremely difficult to teach them that which is good. In every country, and in every age, observations of this kind have been made, and are made, with regard to them. The philosophers of Greece and Rome, though heathens, have stated their opinions very freely on the subject, and in conformity with the remarks wich I have made. The Pársís are acquainted with some of their names; and I shall make a few extracts from their writings. 'The body, says Plato, 'is the grave of the soul. In their present state, men have become weak, unguarded, and thoughtless, hurried away by their own lust and passions. Hence they are reduced to inextricable miseries. Our present intellectual light is darkness, and knowledge is corrupted

in its source. 'In man' says Aristotle, 'there is something congenite with our frame, which opposes, and is contrary to reason.' 'A man, says Plutarch, 'is ill disposed from the beginning - - - all our evils, and sins, and diseases, proceed from an innate evil principle.' 'We are born,' says Seneca, 'liable to no fewer diseases of the mind than of the body. The seeds of all the vices are in us all; but they do not all unfold themselves in every individual. For a man to acknowledge all this is as necessary as the beginning of a cure. 'Evil,' says Sallust, 'arises from the want of a good principle.' 'As wax to the seal,' says Horace, 'so we yield to the suggestions of vice, but the monitor to virtue meets with a harsh reception. Fixed and immutable in evil, we naturally recur to the practises we condemn, 'I see, and approve that which good,' 'says Ovid, 'yet notwithstanding I follow that which is evil.' The very Hindús express sentiments similar to these. They tell us that in every human mind, from the beginning, there is *kàma* (lust,) *krodha* (wrath,) *obha* (avarice,) *moha* (delusion,) *mada* (pride,) and *matsara* (malice). The Christian scriptures declare, that 'the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and give many testimonies of a similar kind'. The doctrine of the original depravity of man is consistent with general experience. It is strange that the assertions of the Vendidad should be permitted to weaken the conviction which naturally exists in connexion with it.

VII. The Vendidad contains gross scientific blunders.

The alleged origin of winter, and the assertions about the non-drowning water, and non-burning by fire, which I have already noticed, may be classed under this head. The proposition, which I have laid down, may, however, be illustrated by other examples. We have errors referring to *natural history* in the accounts which are given of the dog, and particularly in those which are found in the thirteenth Fargard, and from which I make a few extracts. "Among the people created by the Being absorbed in excellence, what is the hidden excellent production which on all gahs present itself against Ahriman, who abounds on every side. Hormazd replied, It is the dog whose head and whose mouth are sharp as a derem, who is named Venghàpere, and whom men improperly call Dojeke. For what purpose has the dog Peshosheron been given to the world? Hormazd replies, he carefully surveys, or travels over the world, and attacks the robber and the wolf". . . . "I have given to the dog, O Asphantamàn Zoroaster, hair for clothing, I have given him a lofty, prompt, and quick attitude, having sharp teeth, enlarged intelligence, as becomes a ruler of the world. I am who am Hormazd have given him a strong and beautiful body. By his intelligence, the world is preserved. When he causes his voice to be heard, the world is in a brilliant state." We have an error relating to

metaphysics, when, in reference to the dog Venghápere it is observed, that "he who strikes it shall have his soul broken into *nine* pieces." We have an error relating to *geology*, when it is observed, that "after the earth was well united the devil made holes in it." We have an error contrary to *common sense*, when, respecting the man who eats food, or who puts on clothes, which have been near the dead, it is observed, "that he shall become old and impotent".

VIII. The Vendidad prescribes an immense number of absurd ceremonies.

Many examples might be adduced in support of this proposition; but I content myself by giving a few. "If the Mázdiasnans wish to make brooks or rivulets, within or around any particular land, to moisten it, to what ought the Mázdiasnans to direct their attention? Hormazd replied; Let the Mázdiasnans search if they can find in this land bones, hair, nails, skin, or blood newly shed. Just Judge." "If the Mázdiasnans do not examine with care, if there is in the ground bones, hair, the skin, or blood newly shed, what shall be their punishment? Hormazd replied, This is the crime of the Tánafúr; the offender shall be struck two hundred times with leather cords of the skin of the horse." More examples will appear in the quotations to be made under the next head.

IX. The Vendidâd ascribes an absurd power, or influence, to ceremonies,

“He who walks upon the stones taking the Ber-
 àshnom, if he is in poverty, shall have abund-
 ance: he shall have children, if he has none; if he
 has no wealth, he shall be rich. He shall have
 excellent lands filled with all kinds of animals.
 After having wanted all, he shall possess all things
 till death.”

“Many cures, O Asphantaman Zoroaster, are
 effected by the good word (Honover.) It is su-
 perior to any other.” “He who has been sul-
 lied by the dead shall say, I address my prayer
 to thee, O soft Sapandomàd. These words
 shall make the Dàrúj powerless. They shall
 strike the Dàrvand Ahriman. They shall
 stike Esher whose glory is cruelty; they shall
 strike the Dews of Mazendran; they shall strike
 all the Dews. (Fargard 9.) What are the words
 which must be recited twice. . . . After having
 distinctly and clearly pronounced these holy and
 powerful words, which must be repeated twice,
 you shall exterminate, or drive away Ahriman
 from the house, from the streets, from the cities,
 from the provinces, from all that is pure in the
 world. You shall exterminate the Dàrúj Nesosh.
 You shall drive away all that is impure from
 houses, from villages, from cities, from streets,
 from provinces, from your own body, from the
 corpse of a man, from the corpse of a woman,
 from the chief of a house, of a street, of a vil-
 lage, or of a province, or of all that is pure in
 the world.” (Fargard 11.) “By this word (Hon-

over) I augment Behisht. It is in observing this word with respect, in making vows with this word, that thou shalt have life and happiness, Ahriman master of the evil law." Words it may be said, according to the Vendidad, are almost omnipotent.

When a man becomes impure by touching a dead body, a number of foolish ceremonies must be performed. He must then be washed. "When the pure water has reached the crown of his head, the Dáruj Nesosh shall go to the back of the head, when the pure water shall go to the back of the head this devil shall go to the front;" when the pure water has reached the front, the devil shall go to the right ear; when the pure water has reached the right ear; the devil shall go to the left ear, and in this manner he shall be driven about till he reach the toes, and then be driven out in the form of a fly.

X. The Vendidad represents ceremonial observances, as more important than moral observances.

Ceremonies may be lawfully used in religion; but they must always have a good tendency, and be indicative of, or subordinate to, morality. They do not hold this situation in the Vendidad, as will be abundantly proved by the following examples.

"The person who carries a dead body into the fire or into the water, and so defiles the elements,

becomes Dàrvand". "He who aids a person who even wishes to carry a corpse into the water becomes Dàrvánd". "The Dàruj shall seize upon these wicked men from the head to the foot. They shall be impure while ages run their course". The punishment allotted for carrying a dead body into the water is greater than the punishment of theft, or other more heinous crimes.

I extract the whole of the 17th Fargard, that we may have a connected specimen of the Vendidàd Sádé. It is not necessary to make any comment upon it. It is as follows:—"Zoroaster, consulting Hormazd, said to him, O Hormazd, absorbed in excellence, just Judge of the world, which exists by thy power.) What actions of men increase death in the world as much as if men made izeschne to the Dews?

"Hormazd replied, Behold, O pure Zoroaster! When in the world which exists by my power, men arrange the hair of the head, pull out bad hairs, or cut them off entirely, or when they cut the nails without observing the prescribed ceremonies;—by these two criminal actions, the Dews come upon the earth, by these two criminal actions are produced the Kharfestars, which men call lice, which go into men, and which run upon their clothes.

"O Zoroaster! when, in the world which exists by my power, you pull out the hair or cut it all off, carry it to the distance of ten gams from men, twenty from pure fire, thirty from water, and

fifty gams from the united Barsom. You must take a hard stone from the uncultivated ground, as large as a veteshte, hard as an almond; you must put it into a hole or pit, leaving the hairs under it, and pronouncing the victorious word, O Zoroaster! Now, O Holy Hormazd, cause trees to spring up abundantly in this place. You must trace round the stone, or mark out, three, six, or nine Keishas, with a metal knife, reciting three, six, or nine honovers. (It is the desire of Hormazd &c. &c.

“You must in like manner take another stone of the length of a little finger, which must be placed at the side nearest to Hormazd. You must lay the nails under it, pronouncing the victorious word, O Zoroaster! O Holy Bahman! I invoke thee with purity! Trace around the stone three or nine Keishas with a steel knife, reciting three, six, or nine honovers, and saying, Bird Ashoshest I address my prayer to thee. I invoke thee. I adore thee. Those who address this Bird Ashoshest shall be assisted against the Dews of Mazendran with the lance, the poignard, the bow, the arrow, the pike, and the sling fitted for stones.

“If this bird be not invoked, and addressed, all these weapons will become the prey of the devils of Mazendran, viz. the lance, the poignard &c. with which the dews of Mazendran can be opposed. The offenders are worthy of hell; they become the possession of the Dáruj

without a chief; they receive no assistance from Sèrosh; they are impure, and are guilty of the Tànafûr." ("Abundance and Belisht.")

Ceremonial impurity is, according to what follows, more heinous than moral impurity.

"Can he who eats of a dead dog, or of a dead man, ever become pure, O holy Hormazd? Hormazd replied: he is impure. This person may shed tears, become yellow by grief, mourn till the chrystalline substance comes out of his eyes; it will avail him nothing, it shall not prevent the Dàruj Nesosh from invading his whole body from the head even to the feet. He shall remain impure while ages run their course.

"Can that person ever become pure, O holy Hormazd, who carries a dead body into the fire, or into the water, and so pollutes the elements? Hormazd replied: such a person is impure; O holy Zoroaster. He who even assists a dog to carry a dead body into the water is impure, he is *Dàrvand*. He who aids a person who even wishes to carry a corpse into the water is *Dàrvand*. He who assists the Dew who has created winter, who kills cattle, who by his mouth, and in his heart, seeks only the accomplishment of evil, he who by carrying a corpse into the water assists to augment the power of his enemy of human kind is *Dàrvand*. The Dàruj shall seize upon these wicked men from the head to the foot. They shall be impure while ages run their course."

Ceremonies, or works approaching to them, according to what follows, are more excellent than good moral actions.

“How long time must elapse before they till and cultivate the ground where a burying ground has been erected? Hormazd replied; this cannot be until the bodies shall have mingled with the dust. They who are careful to destroy Dokhmehs in the world which exists by my power, O Zoroaster, shall, if they have destroyed great Dokhmehs where were the bodies of dead men, be as if they has made the Patete* of thought, of word, and of action. They shall possess the merit of him who is pure in thought, in word, and in action.

“Ahriman shall have no power over the tenth being, (or man absorbed in this excellence.) He shall shine with glory in the dwellings of Behisht. He shall go above the sun, the moon, and the stars. I am who Hormazd, the just Judge, shall recompense him. Thou who performest this action art pure. Thou shall go from the world where the Dew Sedj, author of evil, reigns, into that abode where he is not. If he has committed the Tanafur it shall be forgiven him. He shall have long life; the pure fire shall contribute to his preservation. He shall neither receive blows nor wounds; and the day of his trial, which

* Patete signifies to repent. The prayers which bear this name are confessions which, it is said, specify all the sins which a man can commit.

is the fourth after his death, shall be to him a day of repose as well as the three nights which precede it."

Moral distinctions, the perception of which is so important for the regulation of human conduct, are here entirely lost sight of. Morality is consequently essentially injured. When it is believed, that particular ceremonies are more efficacious than general obedience, the motives to good conduct are sadly weakened, and the eternal claims of the divine Being lamentably overlooked.

XI. The Vendidad Sâdê contains some passages directly opposed to morality.

In the fifth Fargard, the Pârsis are instructed to commit murder. "If a man has commerce with a woman, subject or not subject to a chief, given or not given to a legitimate master, and if she has a child, and if she attribute the child to any particular person, and if he say, Let her aunt be interrogated, then they shall interrogate the aunt of this woman; they shall bring them before the Dastur, or before the King, who shall strike, and destroy, or in some manner or other cause the child to die by giving it of the juice of a tree; but they shall not destroy the man, the woman, or the aunt." The injunction to kill an innocent child is here express. I know nothing similar to it in any book with which I am acquainted, and particularly in a book professing to be a

divine revelation. It is an injunction, to which, at the present day, no Pàrsí will attend.

The conversation between Serosh, and the Dàrj Esheh, recorded in the eighteenth Fargard, is so impure, that I cannot here quote it.

XII. The Vendidàd Sàdè does not propose a reasonable scheme of salvation.

The pardon of sin, the sanctification of the soul, and the obtainment of future felicity, in which salvation consists, are subjects of infinite importance to men. Respecting them, the light of nature gives us little information; and the desirableness of instruction about them by direct Revelation, must be admitted by every person who devotes himself to serious reflection.

I have carefully examined the information which we find respecting them in the Vendidád Sádè; and I find from a comparison of many of its statements, that the means of salvation may be stated to be, the practice of the rites of the Mázdiasnan faith, charity, repentance, and penance, and the intercession of friends. I shall select, as I proceed, a few passages referring to each of the five points to which I have now alluded, which will enable you clearly to see the doctrines which are taught.

1. The practice of the rites of the Mázdiasnan faith is said to be a most efficacious mean of salvation. "The holy man, O Asphantamàn Zo-roaster," it is said in the second Fargard, "who

is faithful to the law of the Mázdiasnans, shall fully efface that which is evil in his thoughts, in his words, and in his actions, as a wind which blows from afar sweeps quickly away the dust." A statement is made almost in the same words in the eight Fargard. Numerous blessings are promised throughout the volume to the observance of particular ceremonies.

We do them no injustice when we characterize many of them as absurd. Those of them, which refer to the expulsion and frightening of devils, by the ablution with water, and the paring of nails, and others which have already passed under our notice, under the preceding heads of this lecture, certainly possess this character. The most important of them, as those which refer to the worship of Hormazd, and the elements, and other animate and inanimate objects, are exceedingly sinful, and directly opposed to the discoveries which God makes of himself in his works.

2. The practice of works of benevolence, and and especially of charity to the poor, to priests, to dogs, and to birds, is frequently inculcated, and highly extolled. "He who gives grain (to the indigent) shall vanquish the Dews. When man gives according to the necessity of the case, the devils are hurt. Let him give yet more, and they shall weep with vexation. However little grain a man gives, it shall destroy the Dew in the place where it is given." (Fargard 3.) "What is the most excellent earth, the most smiling and

propitious to men? Hormazd replied: It is that which men promise to give to holy men, O Asphantan àn Zoroaster. He who violates his promise of giving to holy men, Sapandomàd shall throw into darkness. There are many persons who love not to give: the abode which awaits them is that of hell." (Fargard 3.) "When a man," says the Dàruj Eshem, "collects together goods which he has acquired, and puts them into the hands of the just man, then he strikes the fruit which I have conceived." (Fargard 18.) "The Mâzdiasnans who do not give these animals (dogs) any thing to eat, shall suffer in this world; they shall suffer still more in the next, &c." (Fargard 13.) "If any one give food to the Parodarash (to the cock which represents him upon the earth) who has a noble body, and whom I have produced, that one shall shine gloriously in the celestial mansions." (Fargard 18.) Passages of a similar nature can easily be multiplied. I am only required, in this place, to say a few words on them. The practice of charity is a good thing; and it is a duty incumbent on all according to their ability. It ought not, however, to be enforced by such promises, and directed by such precepts, as are contained in the Vendidâd Sâdé. When it is performed the lack of other duties is not supplied, and the guilt of sin committed is not cancelled or removed, and heaven is not purchased, as is taught in that volume.

3. Repentance is recognized as an atonement for sin, and the procuring cause of merit. "Let him (the man who eats food, or who puts on clothes, which were near the dead) say: I repent, from the heart, of my evil thoughts, of my evil words, and of my evil actions. If this man thus avow the evil which he has done, this confession, this repentance, shall be an expiation." "The pure law of the Mâzdiasnans has ordained, that he who repents of his sins shall only have to pass the bridge." (Fargard 3.) "The pure law of the Mâzdiasnans has only appointed for him who repents of his crimes the pain of passing the bridge." (Fargard 8) These statements are intelligible; but they will not stand the test of reason. Repentance, though, as it involves the hatred of sin, and the turning to God, it is indispensable as a condition of our acceptance with God, does not, and cannot purchase the pardon of sin. It does not make an atonement for the offence which is committed against the divine majesty, by a violation of the divine laws. It does not remedy the evil effects of transgression. No earthly governor," I formerly observed to you, "would say to his subjects, You have only to get sorry for your sins, and then I will pardon you. His authority would not be respected were he to recognize repentance as an atonement; and God's authority would not be respected were *he* to recognize repentance as an atonement. If man were to have the power of sin-

ning, and of removing his sin when he pleases, it is manifest, that he would never continue obedient, and that he would be guilty of procrastination, and that angels and other intelligent beings, on seeing his conduct and success, might be tempted to disrespect the divine authority, and to rebel against the divine law. A man who squanders away his substance and his health in sinful courses does not recover them on repentance. A man who loses his character does not regain the confidence of his fellow creatures, when he confesses his guilt. The criminal who is condemned to death generally suffers his merited punishment, notwithstanding all his tears, regrets, and entreaties."

Genuine repentance, it may be said, leads to obedience. This is certainly the case; but men ought not to delude themselves on the subject of obedience. The holiness and justice of God are so perfect, that they cannot accept of it as an atonement for disobedience. I prove this observation by two remarks.

1. The obedience of men can have no *retrospective* effect. God, at every moment of our existence, demands all our affection, and reverence, and service. When we have done our best in any given circumstances, we have just done what we ought to do, and what cannot exceed the undoubted claims which God has upon us. We have no *overplus* to supply deficiencies, and those deficiencies which have taken place, and which

are innumerable, must ever remain. They form, as it were, a debt; and a debt contracted with a merchant is not cancelled, though every article purchased after its contraction be regularly and fully paid for.

The Pàrsis, who think that God will in the end weigh the good and bad actions of men together, and judge accordingly, overlook the fact which I have noticed, that God requires all the services of men, according to the fullest extent of their power, at every moment of their existence. The imagination that good and bad actions may counterbalance one another, is repulsive to every proper idea which we can form of the divine law. According to it, God does not require us to be *perfect*, or to have a perfect righteousness, in order to escape punishment, but he requires of us only to have as much goodness as we have evil! If the judgment of God, however, which accords with the holiness and justice of his nature, is really to be illustrated by the process of weighing, we must suppose a perfect righteousness in the scale according to which the trial is to be made. What the result will be in regard to man, as far as his own works are concerned, I need scarcely mention. Men, even though they were perfectly to obey the law of God from the first moment of their repentance, would be found deficient on account of their former sins, and they would consequently be rejected.

2. The obedience of men is *not perfect* at any period of their lives. Though they may be sincere in their repentance; though they may carry on a perpetual struggle against sin; and though by divine grace they may be in a great degree successful, they do not, till death, become entirely free from sin. *Their* obedience, then, though it be demanded of them as a duty, cannot be the price of their admission into heaven.

3. Many penances are prescribed in the *Vendidad Sádé*. Some of them are to be inflicted by men upon themselves, and some by priests, and magistrates. They are said to be of the greatest avail in purging from sin, and restoring to the divine favour. I give a specimen of the injunctions which are given respecting them "If a man *commit a certain crime in certain circumstances*, let him procure a thousand hares; let him carry into the pure and holy fire the fat of these animals, while pronouncing the word; let him carry under his arms pure water to wash this fat; let him carry into the pure fire wood well dried, and well examined; let him carry into the pure and holy fire a thousand bundles of wood cut, with pure odour, of a good kind, and well prepared, and with the best odour drawn from odoriferous trees; let him bind a thousand pure Barsoms; let him carry a thousand Zaurs or the Hem, and of the flesh of an animal, pure and well examined, which ought to form a production pure and well examined: and if it happen to die,

let him offer for himself the trees, and especially those which are considered of a good kind, (let him offer for himself) pure water. Let this man destroy a thousand adders, which coil themselves, and creep upon the belly, and two thousand of a different species; let him kill a thousand frogs, which move upon the earth, and two thousand which move in the waters; let him kill a thousand of the ants, which carry grain into their holes, and two thousand of another kind; let him build with care thirty boats to move upon the mighty waters; let him be struck a thousand times with leather cords of goat's, or of horse's skin, which is equal to a thousand derems. Such shall be the punishment of those who commit such crimes. If they submit to it, they shall go into the abode of the saints, if they submit not, they shall go into the abode of the Dàrvands, the place of thickest darkness." Different punishments are prescribed for different sins; and they are not represented merely as beneficial in a moral or civil point of view; but as beneficial in removing the punishment of sin in a future world. The prescription of them cannot be reposed in; They can never stand in the room of that punishment which is due to transgression. The evil of sin is not adequately demonstrated by them. They are not sufficient to deter from iniquity. They are not sufficient to vindicate the honour and glory of an offended lawgiver.

5. Prayers for the dead are prescribed in the

twelfth Fargard, and other places, as highly beneficial to the condemned sinner. The doctrine, that the deceased may be either relieved from their just punishments or difficulties, or advanced in their bliss by the conduct of those who survive them, is highly injurious to the best interests of mankind. It is calculated to harden them in their sinful courses, and to lead them to delay repentance.

There is no method of salvation proposed in the Vendidâd which can shew that mercy can be exercised toward the guilty without an impeachment of the divine justice. As far as it is concerned, then, the grand problem of redemption, in comparison of which all others sink into insignificance, and which should ever occupy the supreme attention of mankind, is still unsolved. The anxious sinner can find in it no relief, and no foundation of hope for the future. The consideration is calculated to produce the most agonizing solicitude in the bosom of every person who has hitherto depended upon it.

XIII. The Vendidâd Sâdé does not give a becoming account of the Future State.

The information which it does profess to give on this subject, and which is principally comprized in the eighteenth Fargard, is very brief, and far from being satisfactory.

When a man is dead, "the Dew, master of the evil law", it is said, "possesses the corpse before and behind, or the whole corpse, for three

nights." What, I ask, can induce the devil to take up his abode in a corpse? Can any injury accrue from this possession? The body, when it ceases to be animated by the soul, is merely a mass of lifeless clay. The happiness, or misery, of the departed is altogether unaffected by its treatment. Let us pass over this circumstance, however, and trace the soul in its progress to the other world. "By the way of time, or the path given by time, they shall arrive upon the bridge Chinevad given by Hormazd. . . The holy souls who have done good shall approach protected by the dog of cattle, or the dog which watches over flocks covered with glory. Those whose guilty souls merit hell shall tremble with the fear of their impending fate. The souls of the just shall go upon a mountain terribly high. They shall pass the bridge Chinevad, which inspires with fear, accompanied by the celestial Izedes. Báhman shall rise from his throne of gold, and shall say, How came you here, O holy souls, from the world of evil, into those pure abodes where the author of evil has no power. Well may these holy souls come near Hormazd, near the Ains-háspands, the holy men &c." The bridge which is here mentioned, forms an ordeal, which does not well befit the omniscient God, who is acquainted with all the thoughts, and words, and actions of men. The guardianship of the dog, said to be enjoyed by the just, is unworthy of that being who is infinite in power, and glory.

Their introduction into the presence of Bâhman and Hormazd, and other created beings, and without any manifestation of, or acknowledgement, by the Supreme God, cannot be the highest species of bliss to which the heart of man aspires.

The restoration of the wicked from the torments of hell, after the sufferance of them for a limited period, or at what the Pârsis call the general resurrection, which is alluded to in the fourth Fargard, and in other passages, takes it for granted that mere suffering will purge from sin, which is a hypothesis contrary to the experience of mankind. Punishment alone has never been known to eradicate the love of iniquity, and to inspire the person on whom it is inflicted with the love of God. It cannot be seen how any measure of it can atone for unpardoned sin, for that iniquity which is an offence against the majesty and grace of the Lord of all. The offender, who has no righteousness independent of his own, to which to betake himself, has every reason to apprehend eternal punishment.

Such are the remarks which I have to make at present on the Vendidâd Sâdè. I beg of you, when forming a judgment of them, to bear in mind what I have already stated to you on the subject of a direct revelation. It may be above reason, but it can in no respect be contrary to reason, and the discoveries which God makes of himself in his works. It must, like the works of God, bear the impress of the Divinity, and be

such as is calculated to secure the faith of the candid and humble inquirer; to instruct him in the most important of all subjects; and to direct him in the path which leads to heaven. As the *Vendidád Sádé*, does not support its pretensions to a divine revelation, and is, as I have shown, in many respects inconsistent with them, the conclusion is warranted, that it has not been given as a Revelation by God. The *Pársís*, whom I have the pleasure of addressing, and many of their tribe, will, I trust, devote themselves to such consideration as will issue in their admission of its accuracy. I am desirous that their decision may accord with their acute discernment in secular affairs; and that they may show that the interests of truth are paramount in their estimation. Let prejudice of every kind be laid aside; and let the fullest determination be manifested to follow only that which is right. Trials may be reasonably expected in the course which ought to be pursued; but when the interests of the soul, and the eternity to which we look forward, are realized, they appear as comparatively trifling and unimportant. The servant of truth has God on his side; and greater is he that is for him than all that can be against him. The divine authority ought to be viewed as the foundation of our actions; and the divine grace to be supplicated for the communication of needful support. The blessing of God can never be enjoyed, while we obstinately cling to error, and refuse to honour

Him, by exercising the judgement and reason which he has conferred upon us, by attending to the intimations of his character and operations which he has given to us, and by following the dictates of eternal truth. I make an earnest appeal to you on these subjects; and I fondly trust, that you will respect the motives with which I profess to be actuated. I seek only your good. I have no more anxious desire, than that which respects your happiness in time, and throughout eternity; and it shall ever be my constant prayer and endeavour to promote it. For all my Christian brethren who are present on this occasion, for many throughout the country, and for thousands in my native land, I can freely make a similar declaration. It is our hope, that as you are superior in education and reflection to many of those around you, you may be among the first of the inhabitants of this great country to embrace the religion revealed by God, and the most powerful instruments of advancing it throughout the length and breadth of India.

When I have directed your attention, in a single lecture, to the Védânta system of the Hindús, I shall, God willing, bring before your notice the claims of the Bible. I hope to be able to shew, from a consideration of its contents, history, and effects, that it is indeed the word of God. In the mean time, I would solicit on its behalf your serious attention. It has sustained the most rigorous investigation by friend and foe;

it has commanded the assent, and veneration, of men of the greatest intellect and education. It has proved victorious over persecution the most direful, and barbarism and ignorance the most gross, and disseminated civilization and holiness in many a land. Its statements are distinguished by the greatest simplicity, consistency, importance, wisdom and truth. The revelation, which it makes of the character of God, comports with the discoveries which he makes of his character and moral government in his works, and is calculated to advance his glory in a manner which the unaided imagination cannot conceive. Its discovery of the state of man explains all the perplexing appearances which force themselves on our attention, and lays the very thoughts and intents of his heart open to our view. It manifests a scheme of salvation, in the appointment of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to be the surety and substitute of, and sacrifice for, sinful man, which accords both with the mercy and justice of God; which is calculated in the highest degree to advance the divine glory; which emphatically illustrates the evil of sin, and deters from its commission; and which effectually, secures the pardon and sanctification, by the Divine Spirit, of all those who sincerely rest upon it, and harmonize with it in their conduct. It furnishes man with the most powerful motives to obedience, and communicates to him the most glorious hopes. It supports him under the hea-

viest afflictions, and calamities, illumines the darkness of the grave, and makes known to him an immortality of perfect happiness, and unalloyed and unutterable joy. Blessed, infinitely blessed, are those who are brought under its influence. May many of you be found among them, and numbered among the children of God and the heirs of heaven !

FINIS.





